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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to investigate ministers' interpersonal communicative skills from the viewpoint of their parishioners and to compare the perceptions of restoration tradition ministers (Churches of Christ) with those of other denominations. A 28-item survey investigating a variety of interpersonal communicative skills unique to ministers including listening, greeting, nonverbal characteristics, attentiveness, openness, and interpersonal communicator style was constructed and administered to 589 members of 12 churches. Results were factor analyzed and uncovered two underlying dimensions. The first, entitled comportment, represented the communicative qualities of friendliness, attentiveness, openness, and a comfortable feeling when communicating. The second dimension, entitled indecorous, represented negatively perceived communication behaviors including interruptions, defensiveness, and judgmental communication. Results indicated that restoration ministers were perceived less favorably across the comportment dimension and more favorably across the indecorous factor. Future studies might include other religious traditions, female clerics, as well as a variety of social and contextual variables. (Three tables of data are included. Two appendixes containing the surveys used and 15 references are attached.) (MG)

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Ministers as Interpersonal Communicators: A Comparative Survey among Southern California Churches

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Running Head: MINISTERS AS INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATORS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to conduct a perceptual investigation of ministers' interpersonal communicative skills from the viewpoint of their parishioners and to compare the perceptions of restoration tradition ministers (Churches of Christ) with those of other denominations. To do this, a survey of twenty-eight items was constructed and administered to 589 members of twelve churches. The survey investigated a variety of interpersonal communicative skills unique to ministers including listening, greeting, nonverbal characteristics, attentiveness, openness and interpersonal communicator style. The survey results were factor analyzed and uncovered two underlying dimensions. The first, entitled comportment, represented the communicative qualities of friendliness, attentiveness, openness, and a comfortable feeling when communicating. The second dimension, entitled indecorous, represented negatively perceived communication behaviors including interruptions, defensiveness and judgmental communication. The survey results indicated that restoration ministers were perceived less favorably across the comportment dimension and more favorably across the indecorous factor. The paper ends with a discussion of the results and call for additional interpersonal communication studies within the context of ministry.

Ministers as Interpersonal Communicators: A Comparative Survey among Southern California Churches

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

For many years, mainstream Christian religions have paid great attention to the study of rhetoric and public speaking. This is especially noticeable among their private church-related colleges, universities and seminaries where courses in preaching and homiletics abound. Little formal training, other than an occasional course in counseling, is provided in the study and development of interpersonal communication skills. Even, Though few communication works specifically focus upon the unique communication context within churches, there has been an explosion of books, journals and other scholarly material generated in this field which could greatly benefit minister and church.

This neglect of interpersonal communication is untenable given the work of most ministers. Their duties have always encompassed more than the preparation and presentation of sermons. Preachers find themselves counseling parishioners, greeting visitors, visiting the sick, teaching in small groups and one-on-one situations, presiding over church committees, and, at times, overseeing a church staff. In short, it would seem that ministers should be one

of the larger consumers of interpersonal studies--especially those which would enhance communicative skills. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. Perhaps it is understandable given the small amount of available religious or communication literature specifically addressing the interpersonal and organizational needs of ministers. Accordingly, it would seem important to begin a process whereby ministry and the scholarly study of communication are more closely linked. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to begin such an investigation by examining the interpersonal skills of ministers from the perception of their parishioners. Such a study could provide ministers with several benefits. First, it could help identify those interpersonal communicative behaviors which may be unique to the profession of ministry. Secondly, such a study could provide ministers with a useful profile. That is, preachers could compare their skills with others in their profession. Finally, the study could add to the body of interpersonal studies which apply themselves to the unique communicative context of churches.

Given the lack of specific information surrounding the interpersonal communicative skills of ministers, it seemed appropriate to design a study to answer some general research questions.

RQ1: What interpersonal communicative skills and abilities, if any, do parishioners feel are most important for ministers?

RQ2: What interpersonal communicative skills and abilities, if any, do ministers feel are most important?

To answer these questions, it was necessary to conduct two surveys, (ministerial and parishioner). Since many of the surveys would be drawn from churches of the restoration tradition, (Churches of Christ), a second research question was generated.

RQ3: What significant differences, if any, exist in the interpersonal communicative skills between restoration tradition ministers and preachers of other denominations?

Review of Literature

Religious Communication

While there is much scholarly information surrounding interpersonal communicative competence, listening, nonverbal communication, small groups, and one-on-one communication, there are few books and/or scholarly efforts which specifically address the communication context surrounding the ministry. There are, however, some religious book titles written for ministers which contain a chapter or a small section devoted to interpersonal communication. One such book is Alvin J. Lindgren's *Foundations for Purposeful Church Administration.* In this book he says: "Every minister need give serious attention to strengthening redemptive interpersonal relationships among the members of the church as well as between pastor and people" (p. 146) Additionally, There are various religious scholars who are supportive of the need for the development and awareness of interpersonal skills. Stewart, believes

that the best interpersonal communication occurs when each person involved listens and talks to maximize their own and other person's humanism" (p. 15). Wilson, Hartz, and Hanna state, "Interpersonal effectiveness flows from communication competence . . . ineffective communication flows from ineffective interpersonal communication" (p. 10). In addition to studying God's word, Bratcher encourages ministers, to "...study, and hopefully apply, interpersonal communication skills that are available from so many useable, scholarly sources, because "spiritual maturity is required [of the minister] in interpersonal relationships and to open and maintain candid relationships with members of [his] congregation" (Bratcher, 57).

While it is important for the minister to improve their interpersonal skills, the writers agree with John Stott's premise when he said: "Communication is a vitally important subject in our day . . . but I am deeply anxious to conform my ministry to the perfect pattern He [God] has given us in the same Word [Bible]" (p. 7). However, it would seem prudent for a minister to have a working understanding of communicative skills as well as a heart that is "right with God" (Durham, p. 12). Hopefully, with the developing "spiritual maturity" of the minister and a clearer understanding of their interpersonal skill development, they will follow the teaching of Jesus when, in Luke 6:45, he said: "The good "man brings forth good things out of the good stored up in his heart . . . for out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks" (NIV).

Communication Competence

With this admonition in mind the question arises, how does a minister become interpersonally communicatively "competent"? While several definitions, models, and methods for measuring competence may be found within communication literature, basically, two broad categories of competence seem to exist: (1) those which proffer competencies as a function of social skills (Bochner & Kelley, 1974) and (2) those which focus upon technical skill or communication accuracy (Powers & Lowry, 1985).

Social Appropriateness. Social competence, usually referred to as interpersonal communicative competence (Wiemann, 1977) is concerned with the ability of a speaker to adapt to situational demands. As Brunner and Phelps (1980) note, "the person who has mastered these types of skills should be able to select from a wide variety of potential behaviors and therefore be able to cope effectively with a variety of diverse situations" (p.5). Wiemann (1975) provides a definition of communication competence that is perhaps the most widely accepted definition among those advocating a social skills approach to communication competence. According to Wiemann (1975) communication competence is the ability of the interactant to choose among available communicative behaviors in order to successfully accomplish their own interpersonal goals during an encounter while maintaining the face and line of their fellow interactants within the constraints of the situation (p. 178).

Skills and Ability. Another type of communicative competence is that which stresses skills and abilities. Powers and Lowry's (1985) Basic Communication Fidelity (BCF) is one such construct. BCF is defined as the communication of cognitions by one person in such a manner as to result in congruent cognitions being constructed by the recipients of that communication. It is not concerned with the social appropriateness of a message--only the fidelity between communicator and receiver. While ministers obviously must be concerned with the social appropriateness of their messages, it is important to note that BCF is positively correlated with perceptions of teaching success (Powers & Lowry, 1980). Additionally, BCF was found to have a significant effect upon perceptions of speaker credibility. Therefore, for ministers who would be perceived as effective teachers and speakers, it would seem that a skills approach to communicative competence could be most useful.

Middle Ground. Recently, other researchers have provided views which provide a middle ground in the social appropriateness versus skills dispute. McCroskey, Richmond, and Stewart, state that competence is a three fold process including: a cognitive understanding of the communication process, the psychomotor capacity to provide necessary communication behaviors, and a positive affective orientation toward communication. "Simply stated, one must develop an understanding of what one needs to do, develop the physical behaviors required to do it (learn to write, be able to articulate words, and so

forth), and want to do it (McCroskey, Richmond, and Stewart, p. 281)."

William Lashbrook and his colleagues at the Wilson Learning Center have conducted much study on interpersonal effectiveness. They would add an additional three elements in their social style construct including assertiveness, responsibleness, and versatility. These views would also seemed to be shared by researchers such as Sandra Bem, in the field of psychology, and Virginia Emam Wheeless, in the field of communication. As with Lashbrook, their research surrounding "androgyny" or "psychological sex", have provided remarkably similar constructs and conclusions about the importance of these three elements in interpersonal effectiveness (McCroskey, Richmond, and Stewart, pp. 282-288). It would seem that an in-depth understanding of these three elements would contribute greatly to the ministers communicative skills and techniques.

It may well be as Roloff and Miller have stated, that "different styles of interpersonal skills may lead to essentially the same outcome" (p. 142) in reconciling conflicts that a minister must deal with. Even so, the writers of this paper believe and agree with Wiserbe and Wiserbe (p.42) that interpersonal communicative competence can only serve to enhance a minister's capabilities and service to God and his church.

Methodology

In order to examine the research questions a two phased multimethod approach was utilized. First, a three stage quantitative technique was used to ascertain how parishioners perceived their minister's interpersonal abilities. To do this it was necessary to (1) develop and pretest a questionnaire, (2) collect data, and (3) analyze the data. In the second phase, interviews were conducted with ministers concerning their perceptions of appropriate and inappropriate interpersonal communicative skills. This data was gathered and treated according to the four stage qualitative methodology outlined by Miles and Huberman (1984 p. 23).

Questionnaire Development

Originally, the questionnaire used in this survey was constructed as a classroom tool for ministers enrolled in a specialized graduate course entitled "*Ministry and Interpersonal Skills.*" Although it was not a requirement of the course, preachers in the class were encouraged to survey their parishioners in order to better learn how they were interpersonally perceived. Four students participated. Accordingly, a variety of questions were constructed to investigate various interpersonal and small group abilities including speaking, listening, nonverbal expertise, and communication style. In all, twenty-eight statements were developed based upon suggestions from interpersonal literature, ministers, and other church leaders. To reduce response bias, a number of the

statements were worded in the reverse so that a favorable response would receive a strong disagreement score. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with each of the statements using a five point bounded scale (strong disagreement to strong agreement). After a successful pretest, the instrument was administered to church parishioners. A copy of the final questionnaire may be found in Appendix A. It should be understood that the intent of the measure was to investigate overall interpersonal communicative skills of ministers away from the pulpit rather than address some of the more global issues related to communication competence.

Subjects

Parishioners. In all, 589 subjects from twelve Southern California churches were used. The denominations included Baptist, Church of Christ, and various evangelical "independent" and/or "free" types of churches. The congregations ranged in size between 75 and 300 members. The typical size was 200. Five of the churches (N = 295) were restoration churches (Churches of Christ). No attempt was made to equalize the sample by age or sex.

Ministers. Telephone interviews with ten of the twelve preachers (two could not be reached), were conducted to determine which interpersonal communicative skills ministers felt were most important. The questionnaire was developed after the parishioner survey had been tabulated. By doing so, it was hoped that questions might be formulated to address any pertinent issues raised

by the parishioner survey. The interview consisted of a series of open ended questions designed to elicit responses concerning desireable and undesirable communication behaviors. Additionally, a series of demographic and education questions were asked to help provide a useful minister profile. Once the questions had been generated, two successful pilot interviews were conducted. Finally, the ministers were contacted and interviewed. The interview questions are included in Appendix B.

Data Collection Procedures

The parishioner survey was distributed to adult members of Sunday School Bible classes. In order to reduce response bias, the ministers were instructed to have a friend or class member distribute and collect the survey information for them.

Analysis

The purpose of this study was two-fold: to study the interpersonal communicative behaviors of southern California ministers and to compare the minister/parishioner perceptions of restoration ministers with those of other denominations. To do this a variety of analytical techniques were used. First, parishioner questionnaire data were subjected to exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation. The purpose of this procedure was to reduce the survey's twenty-eight questions to its underlying dimensions. Next, means testing

procedures (T-Tests) were conducted on those test items with significant factor loadings to determine what significant differences, if any, existed between Restoration churches and other denominations. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted on the new factor variables to determine what significant differences, if any, existed between restoration churches and the other denominations. Finally, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine significant differences, if any, between restoration churches and other denominations on all factor variables. Each of the analyses were conducted using the routines and procedures of the Number Cruncher Statistical System (NCSS) (Hintze, 1988).

Results

Parishioner Survey

Factor Analysis. As may be seen in Table 1 below, the factor analysis procedure uncovered two underlying dimensions. It was decided to use only those items which had a primary loading of .60 or greater and no secondary loadings greater than .40 (point four). As a result, sixteen of the twenty-eight questionnaire items successfully loaded to one of the two factors. Two new variables were created based upon the factor loadings. The first dimension was composed of variables which suggested a friendly manner, attentiveness, openness, and a comfortable feeling when communicating. Therefore this dimension was named *comportment.* To test the stability of the comportment

variable, Chronbach's Alpha procedure was conducted. This test suggested a moderately high innerscale reliability (Alpha = .7825) The second dimension is composed of items which suggest inappropriate communication behavior. This variable was named *indecorous*. The Chronbach's Alpha procedure for this variable revealed a moderately low innerscale reliability (Alpha = .3162).

Insert Table 1 About Here

Means Testing

T-Tests were conducted for each of the sixteen variables to determine what significant differences, if any, existed between restoration churches and other denominations.

Insert Table 2 about here

As the table indicates, there are seven instances where restoration tradition ministers differ significantly from other denominational preachers. Six of the differences are found within the comportment dimension. In each instance restoration tradition ministers were perceived "less favorably" than the other ministers. These differences include perceptions about handshaking, appropriate

eye contact, effectiveness in one-on-one situations, feeling comfortable when speaking with the minister, and openness. On the other hand, an examination of the indecorous variable reveal that the restoration tradition ministers were perceived in a significantly more favorable light.

Analysis of Variance

Analysis of variance tests were conducted for the variables comportment and indecorous. As the ANOVA tables indicate (see Table 3 below), ministers from the two groups differed significantly on each of the variables. Denominational ministers are perceived more positively on the comportment dimension and less favorably on the indecorous variable.

Insert Table 3 about here

MANOVA

A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted between the two groups using the factor dimensions (comportment and indecorous) as dependent variables. This analysis indicated that both groups of ministers differ significantly ($df = 2/562$; $f = 17.47$; $p < .05$; Wilk's Lambda = .941). Thus, the results would seem to indicate that restoration ministers, as a group, in southern California are perceived differently than other ministers in their interpersonal communicative abilities. Finally, a Box's Test Statistic was conducted to examine

the homogeneity of variance. Results indicate that the two sample groups of ministers did not differ significantly (Box's statistic = 5.72; F = 1.9; df = 3/32000, $p < .13$); thus, reinforcing the validity of the MANOVA findings.

Qualitative Findings

A qualitative study was also conducted to determine what interpersonal behaviors ministers believed to be important in their communication with parishioners. It is important to note that this study does not intend to generalize these findings beyond the scope of this narrow research. Instead, it was hoped that the qualitative information would shed new light and provide a richer explanation of the quantitative data already collected. By using two differing methodologies it was hoped that the research findings might be "triangulated". Therefore, the interviews were conducted after the parishioner data had been collected and tabulated. The survey sought to (1) provide a brief profile of the ministers; (2) obtain opinions on the value of communication training (specifically interpersonal communication); (3) examine perceptions of appropriate and inappropriate interpersonal behaviors, and (4) to examine the self perceptions of ministers regarding their denomination and their own interpersonally skillfulness.

Minister's Profile. Of the ten ministers interviewed, all were men who had been full time preachers an average of 14 years. The actual range spanned 7 to 28 years. All were collage graduates--most had master's level graduate degrees. Two had doctorates. Except for two advanced degrees in

counseling, all the degrees were based in theology. Typically, the ministers served congregations composed of 200 members and a full time paid staff which included a secretary and an additional minister.

Importance of Communication. During the interview, preachers were asked to (1) describe all communication training, formal and/or informal, they had received, and (2) to rank in order of importance public, group, media, and interpersonal communication.

As expected, nearly all ministers had taken college courses and training in speech, preaching, and homiletics. Of the sample, only one minister had received no training or public preparation in public speaking. There were no differences between restoration and non-restoration preachers.

When the ministers were asked to rank the importance of public, group, interpersonal, and media communication all but two felt public (particularly pulpit preaching), was the most important form of communication. Their reasons for ranking public communication as most important were varied. "...I have a high view of preaching, ...God speaks through the minister to the people," and "...preaching is the best way to reach the most people." One pastor remarked, "if they'd listen to my sermons I wouldn't need to see them in my office." The clergymen were split between interpersonal and small group communication as the context of next most importance. Those who felt small group communication was of next importance are summarized by the following

statements. "...Besides preaching, most of our work is conducted in small group settings." Another said, "...the small group setting is where you reach the next largest group of people with your message." Some however, felt that interpersonal communicative contexts should be of second importance. Typically, the view was that ministers could be more effective in their public presentations through the information they would receive through interpersonal channels. As an example, one preacher said, "...If I have several people in my office revealing a similar problem within a period of a few weeks, I know I need to preach on that topic." Again, the responses of restoration and non restoration ministers were essentially the same.

Interpersonal Training. When asked to describe what training, college or otherwise, they had received in interpersonal communication, only one of the minister's could recall having a specific college course--though several had taken counseling courses. None of the ministers were required as part of their training to take courses in interpersonal communication. The ministers were asked if they felt such a class should be required as part of their college preparation. The answer was a unanimous yes. The reason that best summarized their position was, "...Good preaching is based upon the information a minister obtains in interpersonal situations." While other reasons were given, perhaps the most revealing response was, "The essence of ministry is relationship, and the essence of relationship is communication." Though

most of the preachers had not taken a course in interpersonal communication, nearly all of them had received non college professional training of some sort. Usually, the training sought to develop specialized skills related to marriage and small group relationships. Most felt the training sessions were useful; however, nearly all expressed some degree of frustration. The following is a typical statement, "...I felt there was too much material and too little time. I knew that I wouldn't be able to remember most of what we were discussing." The responses were consistent between churches of Christ and non-restoration tradition ministers.

Comportment. In order to address the issue of comportment, (a variable which surfaced in the parishioner survey), a specific question was created. "*What interpersonal communication skills should ministers use to be more effective when interacting with parishioners and why?*" With two exceptions, all ministers stressed the need for effective listening skills. Generally this was defined as maintaining eye contact, repeating the gist of what a parishioner said, and giving feedback. The reason normally supplied for this was that it helped the parishioner to feel more at ease and demonstrated empathy and concern on the part of the listener. No other specific skills were mentioned; however, a number of "feeling type" or climate creating variables were mentioned. These included: showing integrity and honesty, making someone feel comfortable, and watching body language.

Indecorous. To address the parishioner issue of indecorous communicative behaviors, the following question was formulated: *"In your opinion, what interpersonal communication behaviors should ministers avoid when communicating with parishioners and why?"* This appeared to be a particularly troublesome question. Generally, the ministers made a single reply which varied from interview to interview with no clear agreement. Responses indicated that ministers should avoid being judgmental and manipulative, and avoid giving advice, touching, and gossiping.

Minister's ratings of themselves and others. At the end of the interview, ministers were asked to rate themselves and their denomination overall as effective interpersonal communicators. They were told to base their rating upon a one to ten scale (ten being the best, one being the worst). In all but one instance, ministers rated themselves more favorably than their denominational counterparts. Most assigned themselves a rating of seven or eight. An interesting difference should be noted between Church of Christ ministers and other denominations. Restoration tradition ministers generally rated themselves an eight while awarding their denomination a four. The following reasons, some scathing, were given. "...We were taught to focus upon doctrine and right thinking–not right relating." "We do the best we can, but we haven't been trained in effectiveness of interpersonal communication." "Our preachers have been theological and issue oriented...we haven't been 'people' people." "We

were taught and modeled to talk at people...we can teach a lesson but not people." Ministers of non restoration churches were more charitable. They usually awarded their denominations a rating which was slightly below their own.

Discussion

Based upon the results of this study it would seem appropriate to make several generalizations. First, parishioners do notice and pay attention to the interpersonal communicative behaviors of their ministers. Preachers should be mindful that their interpersonal strengths and shortcomings are noted. If a positive relationship between the perceptions of interpersonal communicative behaviors and success as a minister may be assumed, it would seem important that preachers should pay special attention to the development of their interpersonal skills. Additionally, it would seem vital that seminaries, minister training programs, etc. add or emphasize courses about interpersonal communicative behavior to their required studies.

Next, it would seem important to note the two dimensions which emerged from the parishioner survey. The results would seem to indicate that church members pay special attention to the qualities represented by the variables comportment and indecorous. Interestingly, both dimensions contain qualities that impact the recipient in a personal way. By all appearances, the comportment variable represents the personal positive attributes of interpersonal

communication while the indecorous dimension represents those which are negative. Based upon this study it would seem that ministers should be especially sensitive to avoid judgmental statements, interruptions, and defensive behavior. This would seem to be of special importance given the fact that most ministers were unable to mention more than one negative interpersonal communicative behavior which impacted a parishioner in a detrimental fashion.

Thirdly, it is interesting to note the differences which exist between ministers within the churches of Christ and the other denominations. Commendably, restoration ministers are perceived as less indecorous than other ministers; however, it is important to note that as a group they scored consistently lower than other ministers on all 13 comportment scales. This finding may best be explained by the minister's statements, mentioned earlier, that church of Christ ministers traditionally have been positional rather than interpersonally oriented. Whatever the reason, it would seem advisable for restoration ministers to increase their sensitivity in matters of comportment.

Finally, it would seem important for universities, seminaries, and other religious training schools to add required courses in interpersonal communication to their curricula. While each of the ministers supported such a position, their motives for doing so were not entirely altruistic. According to the ministers, interpersonal communication is necessary because it helps the preacher to be more effective in the pulpit. While the researchers want to be cautious about

overgeneralizing their qualitative findings, it may well be that these and other ministers may have a somewhat limited perspective of interpersonal communication. A potential danger of such a viewpoint is that parishioners may not be seen as unique individuals with actual problems and needs; rather as symbols or examples for next Sunday's sermon.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the interpersonal communicative behaviors of ministers in Southern California and to compare parishioner perceptions of restoration ministers with those of other denominations.

Two underlying dimensions (comportment and indecorous) were uncovered by a parishoner survey. The comportment was represented by the positive communicative aspects of greeting, eye contact, attentiveness, comfort and openness. Negative communicative traits such as interrupting behavior, defensiveness, and judgmental communication were represented by the dimension entitled indecorous. The findings indicate that restoration ministers scored significantly less on comportment variables yet significantly higher than on indecorous behaviors.

As with any studies there are several limitations that should be mentioned. In the first place care should be given not to overgeneralize the studies findings. The study focused primarily upon fundamental protestant

groups. Different results might well occur had Catholics and more liturgical religions been used. The study most certainly could have differed had Jewish or other non christian groups been included.

Additionally, care should be given not to confuse these findings with those more traditionally associated in communication competence literature. Traditionally, this body of communication considers a broad range of social, cultural, and fidelity issues related to communicative competence. This study focuses more upon perceptions of individual communicative behaviors within the selective context of a church organization. It is hoped that additional studies will be conducted to examine interpersonal communicative behaviors within church organizations. Future studies might include other religious traditions, female clerics, as well as a variety of social and contextual variables.

Table 1

Varimax Rotated Factor Loadings

	Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Comm.
1.	My minister communicates in a friendly manner.	0.6564*	0.1478	0.4528
2.	I like the way my minister shakes my hand.	0.5948*	0.0568	0.3571
3.	I am given undivided attention when I speak with my minister	0.6929*	-.0109	0.4803
4.	My minister is a good listener.	0.6234*	0.1875	0.4239
5.	My Minister makes nervous gestures.	0.2249	0.5319	0.3335
6.	My minister appears impatient to end conversation.	0.2045	0.5134	0.3053
7.	Frequently, my minister will summarize my statements to indicate that he/she understands what I have said.	0.3714	-.1310	0.1551
8.	My minister establishes appropriate eye contact when we communicate.	0.6886*	0.1377	0.4931
9.	My minister is an effective one-on-one communicator.	0.7705*	0.1496	0.6160
10.	My minister is open about his/her feelings.	0.5102	0.2253	0.3110
11.	My minister frequently interrupts me when I speak.	0.0313	0.7221*	0.5223
12.	My minister is an effective communicator in small groups.	0.6316*	0.2308	0.4522
13.	My minister is an empathetic communicator.	0.4243	0.2974	0.2685
14.	My minister is a defensive communicator.	0.1262	0.7117*	0.5225
15.	My minister appears to be a flexible individual.	0.4395	0.1683	0.2215
16.	My minister communicates truthfully.	0.4454	0.4292	0.3826
17.	My minister avoids criticism.	0.0393	-.4448	0.1994
18.	My minister does not have annoying gestures.	0.3420	0.1164	0.1305
19.	My minister pays close attention to what I say.	0.7363*	0.1363	0.5607
20.	I feel I can trust my minister to keep a confidence.	0.3954	0.4491	0.3580
21.	My minister speaks in a judgmental fashion.	-.0272	0.6359*	0.4051
22.	I feel comfortable speaking with my minister.	0.6810*	0.2230	0.5135
23.	I easily understand what my minister is saying.	0.6000*	0.1455	0.3812
24.	My minister speaks in a pleasant tone of voice.	0.4979	0.0421	0.2496
25.	My minister does not monopolize the conversation.	0.5246	0.1290	0.2919
26.	My minister communicates at an appropriate interpersonal distance, (e.g. does not sit too close or too far away).	0.5706	-.0175	0.3259
27.	I think of my minister as a personal friend.	0.7281*	0.0816	0.5368
28.	My minister is a very open communicator.	0.7756*	0.1601	0.6272

Table 2

Table of Means

Variable	Overall	Churches of Christ	Other Denominations
Comportment Dimension			
1. My minister communicates in a friendly manner.	4.606	4.554	4.659
2. I like the way my minister shakes my hand.	4.393	4.242	4.550*
3. I am given undivided attention when I speak with my minister	4.210	4.077	4.345
4. My minister is a good listener.	4.251	4.170	4.330
5. My minister establishes appropriate eye contact when we communicate.	4.421	4.340	4.503*
6. My minister is an effective one-on-one communicator.	4.355	4.240	4.467*
7. My minister is open about his/-her feelings.	3.959	3.763	4.146
8. My minister is an effective communicator in small groups.	4.398	4.347	4.448
9. My minister pays close attention to what I say.	4.256	4.191	4.318
10. I feel comfortable speaking with my minister.	4.323	4.206	4.438*
11. I easily understand what my minister is saying.	4.442	4.371	4.513
12. I think of my minister as a personal friend.	4.057	3.937	4.173
13. My minister is a very open communicator.	4.338	4.190	4.482*
Entire Comportment Dimension	4.302	4.195	4.406*
Indecorous Dimension			
14. My minister frequently interrupts me when I speak.	1.730	1.690	1.780
15. My minister is a defensive communicator.	2.020	1.950	2.090
16. My minister communicates in a judgmental fashion.	2.080	1.810	2.340
Entire Inappropriate Dimension	1.960	1.836	2.084*

N = (Overall = 589; Church of Christ = 295; Other Denominations = 294)

*p < .05 between groups

Table 3

Analysis of Variance

Perceived Differences Between Ministers
On The Variable Comportment

Source	DF	Sum-Squares	Mean Square	F-Ratio	Prob>F
Denomination	1	6.987833	6.987833	16.61	0.0000
ERROR	579	243.6502	.4208121		
TOTAL(Adj)	580	250.638			

Perceived Differences Between Ministers
On The Variable Indecorous

Source	DF	Sum-Squares	Mean Square	F-Ratio	Prob>F
Denomination	1	8.72927	8.72927	9.00	0.0027
ERROR	563	545.8427	.9695252		
TOTAL(Adj)	564	554.572			

No Names Please

My sex is: Male, Female (please circle)

My age range is: 18-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50-64, 65+

INSTRUCTIONS: In the blanks provided, record a number from the scale below (from 1 to 5) that is most compatible with your perceptions of how your minister communicates interpersonally (one-on-one situations) and small group situations. (Please exclude preaching or class teaching)

STRONGLY DISAGREE: 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5: STRONGLY AGREE

You should record a number in each blank. Please give an honest frank response. There are no right or wrong answers.

____ My minister communicates in a friendly manner.

____ I like the way my minister shakes my hand.

____ I am given undivided attention when I speak with my minister.

____ My minister is a good listener.

____ My minister makes nervous gestures.

____ My minister appears impatient to end conversation.

____ Frequently my minister will summarize my statements to indicate that he/she understands what I have said.

____ My minister establishes appropriate eye contact when we communicate.

____ My minister is an effective one-on-one communicator.

____ My minister is open about his/her feelings

____ My minister frequently interrupts me when I speak.

____ My minister is an effective communicator in small groups.

____ My minister is an empathetic communicator.

____ My minister is a defensive communicator.

____ My minister appears to be a flexible individual.

____ My minister communicates truthfully.

____ My minister avoids criticism.

____ My minister does not have annoying gestures.

____ My minister pays close attention to what I say.

____ I feel I can trust my minister to keep a confidence.

____ My minister communicates in a judgmental fashion.

____ I feel comfortable speaking with my minister.

____ I easily understand what my minister is saying.

____ My minister speaks in a pleasant tone of voice.

____ My minister does not monopolize the conversation.

____ My minister communicates at an appropriate interpersonal distance (e.g. does not sit too close, or too far away)

____ I think of my minister as a personal friend.

____ My minister is a very open communicator.

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Appendix B

Follow-up Minister Questionnaire

Profile of: Denomination:

1. Age _____ 2. Sex _____ (1=M, 2=F)
3. How many years have you been preaching full-time? _____
4. On the average, how many people usually attend your church on Sunday morning? _____
5. How many ministers does your church employ? _____
6. Have you had any formal education beyond High School? _____
   What is it?

   Any college degrees? _____ What in?

Questions

1. What training, if any, have you had in communication? (this may include speech, group, etc. and formal and informal training)

2. Preachers communicate in a variety of settings including one-on-one, small group, public, and media settings. In your opinion, which of these contexts is the most important for a minister? Why? (Which would be next most important, and so on...)

3. Have you had a specific college course in interpersonal communication? _____ (1=yes, 2=no) Any workshops or training sessions? _____ (1=yes, 2=no)

   In your opinion, what were the strengths and weaknesses of these courses?

4. Do you believe that ministers, should be required to take a college course in interpersonal communication? _____ (1=yes, 2=no) Why/Why Not?

5. In your opinion, what interpersonal communication skills should ministers use to be more effective when interacting with parishioners? Why?

6. In your opinion, what interpersonal communication behaviors should ministers avoid when communicating with parishioners? Why?

7. In interpersonal situations, what nonverbal communicative skills or behaviors do you feel are most important? for effective communication with parishioners? Why?

8. Overall, if you were to rate your interpersonal communicative abilities on a 1 to 10 scale (ten being the best, one being the worst) how would you rate yourself? How would you improve?

9. Using this same scale, how would you rate the interpersonal communicative skill of the ministers within your denomination when communicating with parishioners? Why? How could they improve?

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